The South 40

Autumn 1984 was a good one for forage crop

By JAMES A. SMITH
Extension Agent

The fall of '84 was unusually warm and moisture was adequate for excellent forage growth. Many stockpiled tall fescue fields have considerable clover present, which will be killed back by low temperatures. Where possible, these fields should be grazed first to utilize the high quality clover plants, leaving the pure grass stands for later.

Toxaphene was designated a restricted use pesticide a year ago. This product may now be legally applied only by certified applicators wearing full safety apparel including respirators for the following: (1) scabies on beef cattle or sheep (2) sicklepod in soybeans where states have special local need registration (3) control of armyworms, cutworms and grasshoppers on cotton, corn and small grain in "emergency situations." For the last use, a federal or state agency must declare that an emergency condition exists or is imminent and the EPA must issue a notice approving the use of toxaphene in that particular situation.

Toxaphene products with old labels that were in the hands of the users before Dec. 31, 1983 may be used until Dec. 31, 1986, buty Only for the uses listed above - not uses listed on the label.

A few weeks ago an article appeared in the Southeast Farm Press, saying "Fall Fertilization Has Few Agronomic Benefits," a Georgia Agronomist was quoted quite heavily. Now this may be true in Georgia, but it isn't true in Virginia. This is a good illustration of the problem found with regional publications.

Here are some agronomic reasons why fall fertilization is recommended in Virginia:

1. There is a lot of data that shows winter survival of perennial legumes and grass legume mixtures is enhanced significantly by fall and winter fertilization.

2. All small grain seedings require about 20 pounds of N and all of the P and K at seeding time. If soybean or grain sorghum is to follow, double-cropped, an additional amount of P and K should go down at the same time.

3. Soil compaction is greater in the spring and another good reason to fertilize in fall to early winter.

4. Avoid applying fertilizer on frozen ground if at all possible.

There are also some non-agronomic reasons for fall fertilization:

1. Get the job done - while there is time.

2. Many farmers in Appomattox County depend on custom application. There's no way everyone can get fertilizer in place when they want it if they wait until spring.

3. For some, there may be some tax consideration to pay for it and apply it now.

4. Usually fertilizer is less costly in the fall. Dealers can reduce inventory, reduce the amount of storage space required, reduce the amount of equipment a dealer must have to get the job done and it may take less labor if the job is spread over 5 months, rather than 3 months.

I have a single copy of the 1984 Corn Hybrid Evaluation. If you want to look the list over so an order can be placed, stop by office.

We hope to have an adequate number of copies before the first of the year.

Pruning that removes dead, diseased, broken or crossing branches should be done periodically. Delay general maintenance pruning until late winter. Over pruning now can expose the trunk to intense sunlight, causing sunscald.

American bunch grapes can be pruned as soon as the vines drop their leaves. Wait until late winter for muscadine grapes.

We're seeing more of the four-wheel drive (FWD) and front-wheel assist (FWA) tractors for better traction and fuel economy.

Attempting to further increase traction, some owners have added dual wheels, increased the tire size and put radial tires on these tractors.

Some changes can damage the drive train components, reduce traction and fuel economy.

Mounting larger or smaller tires either on the front or rear changes the desired wheel-speed ratio. For example, larger tires on the rear axle results in a pushing effect.

An increase of only one tire size on some tractors can cause a power loss of 10 percent.

Dual wheels can cause additional compaction.

For standard tractors, the radial tires can give 10 percent more traction than a bias-ply tire. The increase on a FWD or FWA tractor is minimal and will not justify buying the radial tire.

MARVIN GLOVER (right) vice president of Appomattox County Farm Bureau, receives an award from S.T. Moore Jr., president of the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation at the organization's annual meeting held in Norfolk. Appomattox County Farm Bureau received seven symbolic diamonds for their award plaque. The awards were for achievement in the areas of quota, structure and procedure, public affairs, communications, women's activities, young farmers, and econoomic service.

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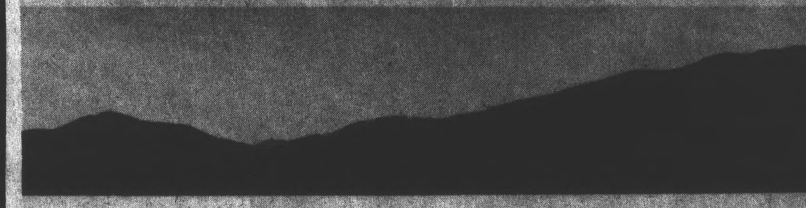

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ASCS Today

By Tom Conrad

1984-CROP WHEAT, BARLEY PRODUCERS TO RECEIVE DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS - Eligible wheat farmers will receive approximately $1.1 billion and barley producers about $50 million in deficiency payments on their 1984 crop, according to Everett Rank, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Deficiency payments are required under the 1984 wheat and barley programs because average market prices received by farmers during the first five months (June through October) of the marketing year were below established target price levels of $4.38 per bushel for wheat and $2.60 per bushel for barley. For oats, the average price for the first five months was above the $1.60 per bushel target price so producers are not eligible for deficiency payments.

The deficiency payment rate is based on the difference between the established target price and the higher of either (1) the national weighted average market price for June through October or (2) the established loan rate.

National weighted average market prices for the first five months of the marketing year are $3.38 per bushel for wheat, $2,34 for barley, and $2.70 for oats. Eligible wheat producers will be paid a deficiency payment rate of $1.00 per bushel for their 1984 crop, based on the difference between the $4.38 target price and the $3.38 farm price. The eligible barley producers' deficiency payment rate will be $.26 per bushel, based on the difference between the $2.60 target price and the $2.34 farm price.

Payments will be issued through local ASCS offices as soon as possible after Dec. 10.

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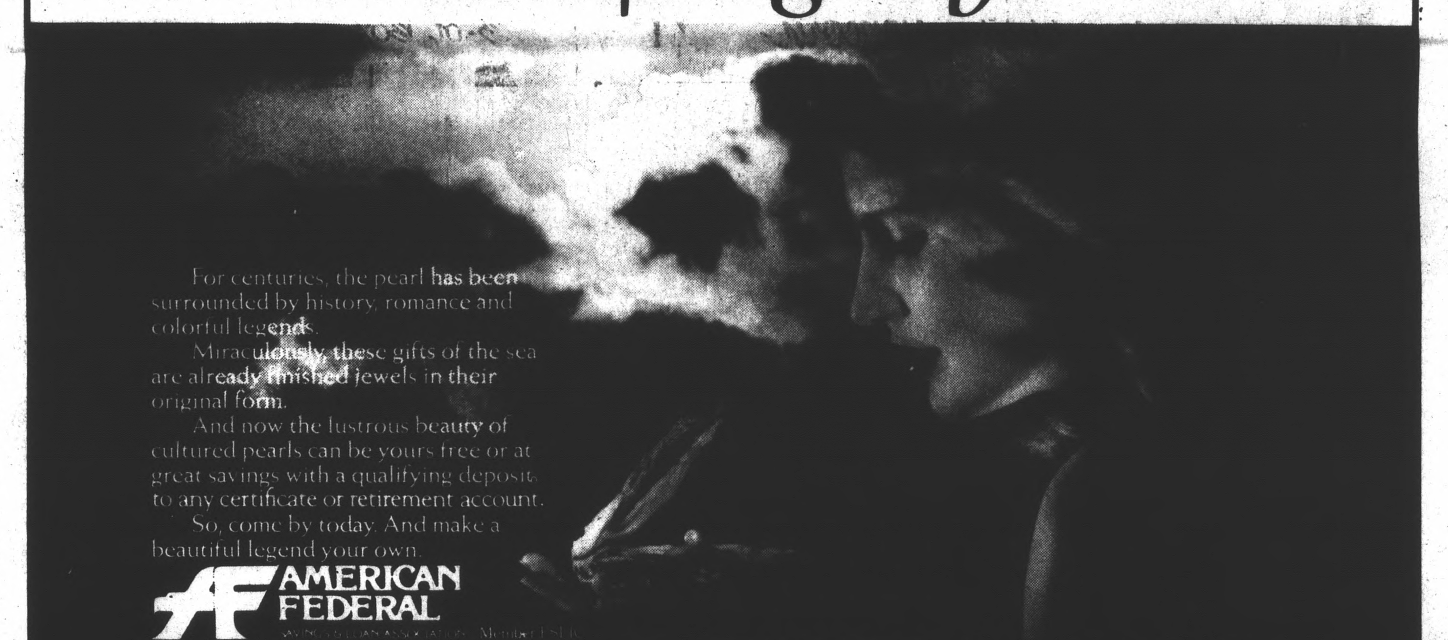

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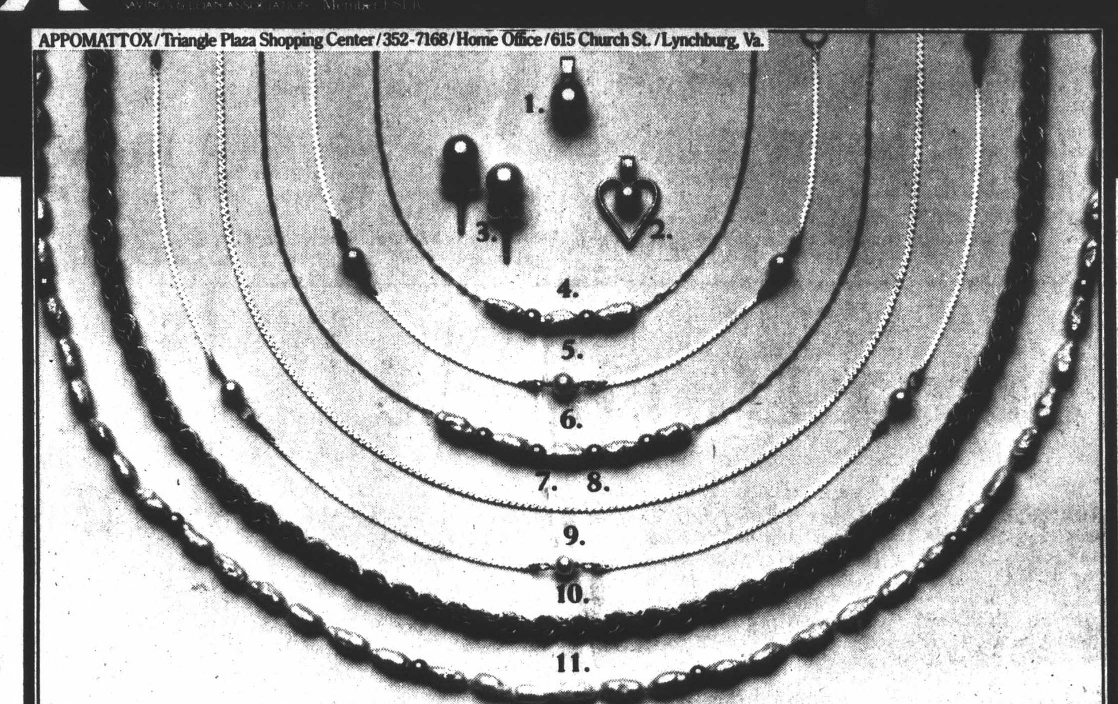

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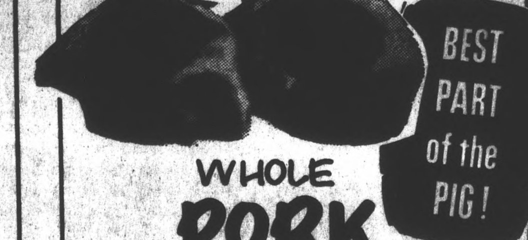

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